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SOURCE Aftenposten (PM edition).

SIGNS OF SPLIT IN FINNISH COMMUNIST FRONT

Helsinki, 19 January 1953 (by special telegram) -- A crisis has arisen within the SKDL (Finnish People's Democratic Union), the main components of which are the Communist Party and the Socialist Unity Party. The crisis goes back to the Prague trials and it is not impossible that it will develop into a split in the "Red Front."

The Socialist Unity Party consists of a small group of former Social Democrats who lean to the left, but do not go so far as to join the Communist Party. Since the Prague trials, there have been clear signs of dissolution within the group. As early as the spring of 1952, ex-Foreign Minister Sveto left the group and returned to the Social Democrats. Then Helo, the Finnish minister in Paris, chose to follow his example.

Still remaining in the party were Atos Wirtanen, Eino Kilpi, and Sylvi Kilpi, all of whom are members of the Diet, and the jurists Eino Pekkala and Ensio Hiitonen. The group is not much larger than this. Now rumors are circulating that none of the members wants to continue in the SKDL.

Reports that the crisis could be traced back also to the Communist camp are partially due to erroneous conclusions [these conclusions are not specified] arising from the defection from the party of Raoul Palmgren, the editor in chief of the Communist organ Vapaa Sansi. [According to earlier reports, Palmgren was expelled from his position as editor in chief.] Palmgren, who is no practical politician, but who is a prophet of Marxist doctrine, has never been able to get along well with the party. Of the Czech Communists who were sentenced to death at Prague, at least one was a personal friend of Palmgren. Palmgren's reaction was to quit the party.

The crisis in the Communist camp actually began as early as the spring of 1948, when Hertta Kuusinen was forced to yield to a group of Soviet Finns, former members of the Terijoki puppet government of Otto Ville Kuusinen, who were competing with her for leadership of the Finnish Communist Party. This

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group had all lived in the USSR and received training there during the years 1930 - 1944, when the Communist Party was illegal in Finland. They came back after the armistice in 1944, but they no longer had their Finnish citizenship, and their applications to regain it were not granted. Since Thure Lehen, Armas Aikiä, and Inkeri Lehtinen are foreign citizens, they have not been able to participate officially in Finnish politics, but nevertheless it is they who today form the Communist Party's real leadership.

During his stay in the USSR, Thure Lehen became a general in the Red Army, but in Helsinki he has only a position in a Communist publishing house. The opposition to the Soviet Finnish group was begun in 1948 by Hertta Kuusinen and her husband, Yrjö Leino. She was unsuccessful in her opposition and her husband, left the party. Since then, the Soviet Finnish group has had no difficulty in controlling the domestic party leaders, who are Aimo Aaltonen, Mauri Ryömä, and Yrjö Murto.

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